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## Admiral's Call: Chaplain Darold Bigger

### MARFORRES RELIGIOUS MINISTRIES WORKSHOP

More than 100 chaplains and RPs attended the Religious Ministries Workshop in New Orleans in February. Focused on Readiness, the MARFORRES staff gathered speakers who addressed real life, real time issues: Combat and Trauma Ministry, Trauma Ministry After 9/11, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Mobilization, Security Clearances, Casualty Assistance Calls and a Critical Incident Stress Management training review.



*A little PT at the workshop. If you look carefully you can see Chaplain Bigger and RPCM Bremer.*

If that agenda wasn't enough to wake chaplains and RPs to the critical need for them to be ready, Lieutenant General McCarthy's welcoming speech did. As the Commander of the Marine Forces Reserve, he began with a question. "How many of you expect to be mobilized in the near future?" About one quarter of the chaplains and RPs in the room raised their hands. "Keep your hands up," he requested. "The rest of you—you're wrong!"



*Chaplain Lyman Smith from the Chief of Chaplains Office shares during a session.*

From then on every attendee's pupils dilated and they each paid careful and personal attention to this valuable training.

Several presentations came from SELRES chaplains and RPs themselves, including RP1 Orville Dombrosky, RPC Ron Black, CDR Greg Horn and CDR Keith Taylor. In addition to General McCarthy's visit, the MFR Deputy, Major General Larry Taylor came to share his greetings as did Brigadier General Jack Bergman, the MFR FSSG CG. Many active duty chaplains and RPs were there

also and gave reports and presentations. RPCS Harold Terry and CAPT Dave Kloak from HQ USMC; CAPT Steve Linehan and RPCS Hendrickson from CNRFC; CAPT Moses Stith, CDR Roosevelt Brown, and RPCS Childers from MFR, RPC Eileen Severs and CAPT Allen Allen from MARFORLANT, RP1 John

The Religious Ministries Newsletter is published for Naval Reserve chaplains and RPs who serve with Naval Reserve Forces Command, the Marine Forces Reserve, and the USCG.

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## RMW (Continued)

Bertorelli, NAS New Orleans; CDR Jeff Rhodes from MARFORPAC, CDR John Franklin from CREST, and SGT Bobby Breland and Colonel Ellingson from MFR. In addition, the Marine Recruiting Command chaplains were there inviting attendees to volunteer support for Marine recruiters. (By the way, they brought coffee cups with them that were so highly valued that when Chaplain Bigger left his cup and digital camera in the conference room at the end of one day, when he went back to get them, the camera was still there but the cup was gone!)

In addition to the presentations and large group sessions, each MSC had a breakout session to work on their own agendas. And between sessions this workshop provided invaluable opportunities to network with other reserve chaplains. Many thanks to our MFR staff for another valuable and memorable event!



*Chaplain Bigger presents an award to Chaplain Sheldon for logistics coordination of several RMWs. Chaplain Sheldon is being recalled to work with decedent affairs overseas.*

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## PDTW on Preaching

*Preaching through Times of Crisis: The Power of Homiletical Healing* is the subject of a Professional Development Training Workshop hosted by the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps and NETPDTC. The instructor is Dr. Endel Lee, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Pastoral Ministries at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and a Naval Reserve chaplain. The dates of this event are April 24-25, 2003 in New Orleans. For further information contact Chaplain Endel Lee at [elee@nobts.edu](mailto:elee@nobts.edu) (504) 282-4455 Ext. 3365 or Chaplain Jonathon Frusti at [CDR-Jonathon.Frusti@cnet.navy.mil](mailto:CDR-Jonathon.Frusti@cnet.navy.mil) (850) 452-1655. You can also go to [www.cnet.navy.mil/index.html](http://www.cnet.navy.mil/index.html).

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## Chaplain Harold Robinson Selected for Flag

Chaplain Harold Robinson has been selected and nominated as the next Reserve flag chaplain. On 1 August 2004 he will be promoted to Rear Admiral (lower half) and become the senior Naval Reserve Chaplain. In October, 2003 he will transfer to a billet in the Reserve Flag Matters office. They will assign him ADDU to the Chief of Chaplains' Office. We congratulate Chaplain Robinson and look forward to his competent and vigorous leadership in the years ahead!



*Chaplain Robinson leads in prayer at the recent RMW.*

## Religious Program Specialists

*The following poem came from RP3 John Werner who describes the life of a Reservist in a times like these.*

### The Call

Another day passes  
Another newscast starts with a now familiar sight:  
Another Reserve unit was called into Active Duty.  
Another National Guard unit was called up.  
Another Active Duty unit sent someplace.  
Another ship sets sail for the Persian Gulf.  
Another development in the War on Terrorism.  
Another development in the Stand-off with Iraq.  
And a friend asks, "Have you gotten the phone call yet?"  
And a store clerk asks, "Are you going to be called up?"

I am a Reservist.  
And I haven't been called up.  
And I don't know when I will be called up.  
And I don't know if I will be called up.

Thousands of Reservists:  
Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Marines  
Ordinary men and women  
Citizen-Soldiers all of them  
Have been called up  
And have answered the call  
And have left their civilian lives behind  
And have put on their uniforms.

They've been mobilized.  
They've been activated.  
They know when that phone call will come,  
It already did.  
The call came when they were at work.  
The call came during dinner.  
The call came on Christmas.  
The call came during their son's basketball game.  
The call came in the middle of wedding preparation.  
Like Mr. Murphy, the call came at the worst possible moment,  
But the call came.  
And they were called up.  
And they said, "Yes, Sir."  
And they went.

And still I wait,  
Will the phone call ever come?  
I don't know.  
To me, the ones who have been mobilized are the lucky ones.  
Not that they are lucky to have been mobilized,  
The possibility of being called up,  
The possibility of getting the call,  
Like a Sword of Damocles is no longer hanging over their head.  
The call has come.  
And they were called up.  
And they said, "Yes, Sir."  
And they went.



**RPCM Matthew Bremer**

## The Chaplain/RP Photo Op



If you have images of yourself or other chaplains and/or RPs, please share them with us at the *Reserve Religious Ministries Newsletter*. Seeing each other in action provides for mutual encouragement in ministry! Send images to [barryc@nsb.org](mailto:barryc@nsb.org).

*Chaplain Bob Marshall is the Command Chaplain aboard the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72) currently underway in the Arabian Gulf. This amazing photo is of a "cold water wash down" during this recent deployment.*



## *Two Navy Chaplains*

The ancient Rabbis taught that in the sight of God a single human life is as valuable as the world in its entirety. Thus we are taught to approach a memorial service for seven fallen astronauts in Houston not as one memorial service for seven deaths, but as one service for a tragic death—seven times. A PDTC taught me that grieving begins when we acknowledge the terrible pain of loss; only then can we seek God's help in healing. So it was that Chaplain Gene Theriot and I were called to acknowledge the sorrow of seven families (and so many around the world) by participating in their pain and grief. Truly I cannot remember any sadness that exceeded that day in Houston as we, together with the parents and children, husbands and wives, grandparents, siblings and colleagues, all explored painful and previously unplumbed depths of the soul.

The President spoke powerful words of comfort, vision and hope. The Chief of the Astronaut Corps gave personality and individuality to each life so tragically lost. Amidst it all, two Naval chaplains were allowed to live a sermon through our work together. One Christian and one Jew, one Active and one Reserve; there we stood shoulder to shoulder and read aloud from our common source of inspiration, the Psalter. I cannot imagine a more powerfully persuasive symbol of our "unity in diversity" than our reading the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm antiphonally, Gene in English and I in Hebrew. Did we know we were ministering to the nation and the world? Did we imagine that our prayer, "O Eternal God, when we view our little world from out in space we learn the unity of all humanity here on earth, we are one as you are one," would be quoted by AOL or become fodder for the New York Times editorial? Did we know the Chief of Chaplains would lift up our ministry in his letter to the Corps? No! We were called to be present "in the moment," to live our ministry together, and the synergy of that ministry made all the difference.

As men and women of faith, we minister to souls in times of joy and distress, bringing a sense of God's loving presence into everyday moments and being a source of strength and healing in time of pain. Most of all, we help God's people find mean-



*Navy Chaplains Harold Robinson and Gene Theriot at the NASA Memorial Service for the seven space shuttle Columbia Astronauts.*

## *Two Navy Chaplains (Continued)*

ing in their lives, whether in celebration or calamity. We all do that day by day as God gives us the grace to enter into others' lives in unique and important ways. Seldom are we called upon to attempt all that before an "all network link," broadcast around the world. But each time we minister to another soul as a Navy Chaplain or assist in that ministry as an RP, we can say to ourselves and to each other the words spoken by Mordechai to Queen Esther: "who knows whether it is not for such a time as this that you have come to this lofty place" (Esther 4:14)

*This article is by Harold Robinson, the newly selected Reserve Flag Chaplain.*

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## *Mobilization Process*

At the recent Religious Ministry Workshop some important information regarding mobilization was conveyed to those in attendance. Here is a synopsis of what was said in New Orleans.

Don't quit work, leave home, or announce that you're leaving until you have orders in your hands. Wishes and intentions expressed by your gaining command, any other active duty command, or reserve personnel are exactly that: wishes or intentions. They cannot be carried out until approved by the proper authorities—and there are several. The approval sequence goes like this:

1. The active duty command initiates a mobilization request via their chain of command.
2. Requests are staffed through the cognizant Fleet or Marine Corps' Headquarters. Supported mobilization requests are forwarded to OPNAV.
3. Mobilization requests validated and funded by OPNAV are sent to CNRFC for assignment.
4. Members in validated billets are mobilized. Billets without an assigned member or validated requirements without assigned billets are staffed by CNRFC.

Personnel who are interested and available for emergent recalls should first contact their Personnel Officer at their reserve center and request their Mobilization Assignment Status (MAS) code be changed to Volunteer (VOL). A courtesy call to the CNRFC Religious Programs office (800 245-4546) would be appreciated.

**"Don't quit work,  
leave home, or  
announce you are  
leaving until you  
have orders in your  
hands"**

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MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER ARE  
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[HTTP://WWW.CHAPLAIN.NAVY.MIL](http://www.chaplain.navy.mil)

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*"Support the Navy-Marine Corps team  
with mission ready units, equipment, and individuals  
throughout the full range of operations from peace to war."*

*United States Naval Reserve chaplains and Religious Program Specialists serve the needs of the men and women of the United States Navy, United States Marine Corps and the United States Coast Guard by providing for the free exercise of religion and spiritual ministry around the world. Actively serving during peacetime, Naval Reserve chaplains and RPs are also available for mobilization in time of war to meet the needs of sea service personnel whenever and wherever they are called upon.*

